

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 21 and 24 as follows. Please cancel claim 45. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1-20 (canceled)

Claim 21 (currently amended) A blade assembly that can be assembled into a microkeratome used to cut a cornea, the microkeratome including a pin, comprising:

a blade that has a cutting edge, a rear edge, and a pair of side edges that extend between said cutting edge and said rear edge;

a blade holder that is coupled to said blade, said blade holder having a top surface, a bottom surface opposite from said top surface, and a front surface between said top and bottom surfaces, said blade holder having a recess that is located in said top surface and receives the pin, a slot that is located in said front surface and receives said rear edge of said blade, and a hole; and,

a bonding agent that is introduced through said hole and is attached to attaches said blade holder and[[to]] said blade.

Claim 22 (original) The blade assembly of claim 21, wherein said blade holder has a front surface that includes a raised surface.

Claim 23 (original) The blade assembly of claim 21, wherein said blade holder extends from said rear edge of said blade.

Claim 24 (currently amended) A blade assembly that can be assembled into a microkerotome used to cut a cornea, the microkeratome including a pin, comprising:

a blade that has a cutting edge, a rear edge, and a pair of side edges that extend between said cutting edge and said rear edge; and,

a blade holder that is coupled to said blade, said blade holder having a top surface, a bottom surface opposite from said top surface, and a front surface between said top and bottom surfaces, said blade holder having a recess that is located in said top surface and receives the pin, a slot that is located in said front surface and receives said rear edge of said blade, and bonding access means; and,

bonding means for bonding said blade holder to said blade and which is introduced through said bonding access means.

Claim 25 (original) The blade assembly of claim 24, wherein said blade holder has a front surface that includes a raised surface.

Claim 26 (original) The blade assembly of claim 24, wherein said blade holder extends from said rear edge of said blade.

Claim 27-31 (canceled)

Claim 32 (withdrawn) An assembly tool for assembling a blade holder to a blade to create a blade assembly used to cut a cornea, comprising:
a base;
a slide bar coupled to said base; and,
an adjustable stop that is coupled to said base.

Claim 33 (withdrawn) The assembly tool of claim 32, further comprising a cannula coupled to said base.

Claim 34 (withdrawn) The assembly tool of claim 32, wherein said adjustable stop includes a micrometer.

Claim 35 (withdrawn) The assembly tool of claim 32, further comprising a pin attached to said base.

Claim 36 (withdrawn) An assembly tool for assembling a blade holder to a blade to create a blade assembly used to cut a cornea, comprising:

base means to support a blade;
press means for pressing a blade holder into the blade; and,
adjustment means for varying a cutting depth of the blade.

Claim 37 (withdrawn) The assembly tool of claim 36, further comprising bonding means for introducing a bonding agent to the blade to bond the blade holder to the blade.

Claim 38 (withdrawn) The assembly tool of claim 36, wherein said adjustment means includes a micrometer.

Claim 39 (withdrawn) The assembly tool of claim 36, further comprising alignment means attached to said base.

Claim 40 (withdrawn) A method for assembling a blade assembly, comprising;
adjusting a position of a stop; and,
pushing a blade holder onto a blade until the blade holder engages the stop.

Claim 41 (withdrawn) A blade package, comprising:

a pair of covers, at least one of said covers having an opening to allow inspection of the blade assembly.

Claim 42 (withdrawn) A blade package, comprising:

a pair of covers, at least one cover having a color indicative of a cutting depth of the blade assembly.

Claim 43 (withdrawn) A blade package, comprising:

a pair of covers that enclose a blade assembly, at least one cover having means for providing an indication of the cutting depth of the blade assembly.

Claim 44 (withdrawn) A gauge for a blade assembly, comprising:

a housing that has a slot adapted to receive a blade and a cavity adapted to receive a blade holder attached to the blade.

Claim 45 (canceled)

Claim 46 (withdrawn) A caliper assembly for measuring a corneal flap, comprising:

a caliper that has a readout and a tip; and,

a cover attached to said tip.

Claim 47 (withdrawn) A method for measuring a corneal flap, comprising:

attaching a pair of covers to a pair of tips of a caliper;

measuring a combined thickness of the covers;

reading a measurement of a corneal flap located between the cover; and,

determining the thickness of the corneal flap by subtracting the thicknesses of the covers from the reading.